Prayers

FOR
VARIOUS OCCASIONS
AND NEEDS

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Prayers

For Various Occasions and Needs

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For Various Occasions and Needs

BY

FRANCIS GREENWOOD PEABODY

PLUMMER PROFESSOR OF CHRISTIAN MORALS (EMERITUS)

IN

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Boston and New York

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F. W. P.

In full midsummer of maturing powers,
His wisdom ripening for its harvest-tide,
Exploring subtle truths in tireless hours,
Unscathed by selfishness, unspoiled by pride,
Serene as if composed to quiet sleep,
He greeted death and calmly smiled on pain,
Content if other laborers might reap
Along the whitening furrows of his grain.
'What blindfold fate, with cruel irony,
Devises such irreparable harm;
Bids the unfit survive, and ruthlessly
Effaces learning, leadership, and charm?'
So, while the light of faith was hid by tears,
And the dear life escaped our tardy praise,
We marked the unripe grain of waiting years,
And mourned the wastage of the unlived days.

Yet who shall set a term of fruitfulness,
Or reckon life by years of gain or loss?
Did not the Master of the soul confess
His work was finished when he bore his cross?
Was death at thirty an untimely end,
Or have the ages found his words untrue, —
'Into Thy hands, my Father, I commend
The perfect work Thou gavest me to do'?
Ah, not in tasks fulfilled, beloved son,
But in the way made plain, the lives renewed,
The healing touch, the long research begun,
Was your sufficient source of quietude.
To cheer and reassure the suffering,
Desiring life, but unafraid to die; —
Where is, O Death, for such a soul thy sting?
O Grave, how barren is thy victory!

'We hear, in these days of scientific enlightenment, a great deal of discussion about the efficacy of prayer, and many reasons are given us why we should not pray. But in all this very little is said of the reason why we *do* pray, which is simply that we cannot *help* praying. It seems probable that, in spite of all that science may do to the contrary, men will continue to pray to the end of time, unless their mental nature changes in a manner which nothing we know should lead us to expect. The impulse to pray is a necessary consequence of the fact that whilst the innermost of the empirical selves of a man is a Self of the *social* sort, it yet can find its only adequate Socius [its 'great Companion'] in an ideal world.'

(William James. 'The Principles of Psychology.' 1890. P. 316.)

'We have, *in the fact that the conscious person is continuous with a wider self through which saving experiences come*, a positive content of religious experience which, it seems to me, *is literally and objectively true as far as it goes*.' 'God is the natural appellation, for us Christians at least, for the supreme reality, so I will call this higher part of the universe by the name of God. We and God have business with each other; and in opening ourselves to His influence our deepest destiny is fulfilled.'

('Varieties of Religious Experience.' PP. 515, 517.)

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Prayers

I

WORSHIP

Prayers

For Various Occasions and Needs

For the Morning

SHINE down upon us, we pray, with Thy Holy Spirit, as with the light of the morning, to waken us from sleep both of body and of soul; to bring light to the darkness of our minds and wills, and to show us this day how to go and what to do, in faith and hope and love.

Or this:

GIVE us grace, we pray Thee, to greet the new day with expectant minds and obedient wills; and, in Thy mercy, show us from hour to hour, among the cares and duties which await us, the way to go and the truth to trust and the life to lead.

Or this:

MOST gracious God, Who hast provided the night for rest, and in whose

whose mercy another day is given, come to our waiting hearts as with the light of morning, to drive away the deeds of darkness and to put on us the armor of light. Waken our drowsy minds and invigorate our hesitating wills, that the dead past may bury its dead regrets, and better desires arise within us, as the day-star dawns and the shadows flee away. Deliver us today from the cares which most easily perplex us and from the sins which most easily beset us, that the new day may begin with a new sense of emancipation, courage, and restraint. May tasks be done with diligence, and duties be greeted with joy, that with willing hearts and patient desires we may fulfil this day, not our own wills, but the will of Him Who sends us, and may accomplish that work, be it great or small, which Thou in Thy mercy hast put into our hands to do.

For the Day's Work

Before the day's work claims, as it must and should, the energy and patience it needs, give us, from the rich resources of Thy beneficent care, the sense of guidance and control among the obligations and compulsions of the day. May our work, whether of hand or brain, be done not as slaves of the world but as its masters, that the routine of life may be, not wearying and disheartening, but fulfilled with freedom and joy, as an answer to Thy call, and a trust committed to our hands. We remember the solemn pledge with which Jesus faced his mission: I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work. With self-effacing loyalty, may we do the work we are sent to do while it is day; and may a glimpse of the great patience of God illuminate our

our tasks, and convert drudgery into love. Quicken the sympathy of those who work for those who have no work to do, that wisdom and foresight may mitigate the disasters of industry, and secure to the faithful worker the fruits of honest work. Sustain each humane effort for fraternalism and justice, not as a dream of the future, but as the witness of an emerging social conscience, that employers and employed may know themselves members one of another, where the disloyalty of one is the disaster of all, and the productive work of each is a mutual strength and hope. Not as those who would snatch success from the failure of others, but as servants to whom have been given varying gifts, may the workers of the world await their Lord's coming at the end of the day, and deserve His gracious greeting: Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of thy Lord.

For Evening

Abide with us, O searching and chastening Spirit of the living God, for it is evening and the day is far spent. Let the shadow of Thy presence shelter us from the haste and fret of the day, and the sense of Thy tranquillizing guidance give us peace and rest. From all the blunders and follies of the day; from its wandering desires and its unjust judgments; from any sense of grievance or any word of blame which has blotted the fair hours, good Lord, deliver us. May the perplexing problems and petty cares of the day relax their grasp, and the meaning of life shine through the gathering dusk like the watching stars. Lift our minds to the vision of the permanent; rescue our wills from the illusions of the day's gain or loss; that the pressure of routine may not crush the life of the spirit, or the gain of the world become

become the loss of the soul. May we rest tonight in the protecting shadow of Thy love, and wake with new courage and hope to fulfil the duties of another day.

For the Practice of the Presence of God

Entangled in the web of life, bewildered by its vicissitudes, submerged by its demands, harassed by its haste and waste, our hearts cry out for a meaning in events, an interpretation of experience, a hold on the stability of universal and beneficent Law. Reveal to us, we pray, this vision of a purposeful Universe, and restore to us by communion with the Eternal the significance and worth of the passing days. Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee. From the wanderings of our desires, and the hesitancy of our resolutions, and the perversity of our passions, lift us into the higher air of tranquil and self-forgetting dedication to Thy mysterious but merciful designs.

At times this sense of guidance eludes our grasp; we are arrested by the cares and

and joys of life, or ensnared by its duties and routine, until the things that are near and small shut out the things that are far-reaching and reassuring. Again, and in intermittent revelations, the vision of a design in our experience, a way through our perplexities, and a support in our sorrows, strikes like a ray of sunshine through a darkened room, and life becomes illuminated and sustained, as though we felt in the darkness the touch of a firm and steadying hand.

Prolong and clarify for us, we pray, these glimpses of reality, and enable us by resolution and habit to practise the presence of God. Detach our minds from the incidental, and fix them on the Eternal, that though we know but in part, we may know that we are known. Before we have found Thee, Thou art finding us, and renewing the ancient promise, the Father seeketh such to worship Him. Gather up our varied experiences, whether

whether of happiness or of sorrow, into this reverent recognition of Thy purpose for our souls. Chasten us for our foolish conduct and our undisciplined wills, and renew our patience and self-control. Fortify us in the venture of faith with courage and consecration. Our heart and flesh cry out for the living God, and in nothing less than an answer to that cry is our satisfying and enduring peace.

For the Heavenly Vision

Eternal God, among whose daily miracles our lives are set, renew in us the assurance of that invisible world which environs us with its spiritual persuasions. The blessings which surround our favored lives may by their very abundance shut out the larger view. Our homes, our plans, our work, our play, the absorbing interests of our cares and joys, imprison our thoughts, and leave little room for our ideals and our dreams. Open our eyes, that we may see the sustaining environment of Thy love and law, and through the things which are temporal may discern the things which are eternal. Where there is no vision the people perish. Save us from perishing through lack of vision, and reveal to us the world of spiritual realities. Rescue us from blindness of heart and atrophy of desire, from the control

control of the temporary and the trivial, from sensual satisfactions and self-centred aims, that the view may be kept open to the far horizon of the Eternal, and the glare of the lamps about us may not shut out the light of the stars. And if even in brief glimpses the meaning of life is thus disclosed, and our homes are sanctified by joy or sorrow, and the pressure of work is relaxed, and the world of opportunity calls to generous service, may these disclosures of a larger life reveal to us Thy beneficent guidance, and our daily prayer be made that we be not disobedient unto that heavenly vision.

For an Answer to Prayer

As our thoughts ascend from our own small concerns to the heights of Thy intention, help us to offer to Thee a prayer which may deserve an answer, that we may bring to Thee, not our transitory desires, but the real needs of our unsatisfied souls. Our wills are ours, we know not how; our wills are ours, to make them Thine. Our minds are ours, to seek the truth which makes men free; our duties are ours, to conform our decisions to Thy law of righteousness; our hearts are ours, to set their affections on things above, not on things on the earth; to submit themselves to Thy discipline, and by glad surrender to be made Thine.

We pray, then, for whatever need may seem to us most immediate and real; for health and strength, if they have been restricted or denied; for comfort and

and peace, if we have failed to attain them; for the joy of success and the assurance of victory; for the restoration of happiness after disappointment, like the coming of sunshine after rain. Our Heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of these things. But beyond these temporary desires and vagrant needs hold before us the higher vision of Thy larger purpose, and set our prayers in the wider horizon of Thy law. Whatever else we may seek, let us seek first Thy kingdom and Thy righteousness, that only what leads us to that end may be added unto us. Make our bodies, whether in health or sickness, fit dwellings for Thy Holy Spirit, assured that if any one defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy. Convert our ambitions into the desire for service, and free our joy from the lust of glory or gain. Restrain us from the illusions of happiness, and reveal to us the permanent realities of self-forgetting love; that

that the answer to our prayer may be better than we could ask, and our petition be merged in submission, and satisfied in obedience. The blessings which we enjoy are not our own creation, but Thy benefaction; not our gain, but Thy gift. We are guests at Thy feast of life, and Thou dost offer to each of us the wedding garment which makes us fit to enter.

And if among the vicissitudes of life we be led into the dark places of disaster or affliction, so that the cry is that of our Master: Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour! then through the darkness let us hear his tranquil confession: But for this cause came I unto this hour; My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me; Father, glorify Thy name. Let the sufficient answer to our prayer arrive, not in our own desires accomplished, but in Thy purpose gladly and patiently fulfilled,

filled, and in Thy will done, imperfectly indeed, but at least with a glad loyalty, as it is done in heaven.

For Those of Little Faith

We, whose minds are ensnared in the circumstances and problems of daily life, make our candid confession as those of little faith. We are not of those who deny or despair; we do not sit in the seat of the scorner; we are simply those whose minds have been turned another way, and who are so busy with work and play, with study or care, that it is hard to hold fast the faith we once had. The habits of religion have grown uncongenial; we listen listlessly while the preacher prays; the business of life is so engrossing that it leaves little room for mystical meditation or spiritual vision; we are those to whom Jesus repeatedly turned with his appeal: O ye of little faith!

We pray, then, that the prayer of little faith may be at least sincere and real. We do not ask that the world's affairs should

should be forgotten or despised; we ask that the deeper meaning of these affairs may be realized and interpreted. We recall the influences and admonitions which the world itself provides, — the sanctities of home, with its discipline and joy; the privilege and blessing of friendship and affection; the beauty that shines from the works of nature and from the faces of those we love; the exhilaration of truth-seeking and duty-doing; the freedom given to integrity, and the insight bestowed upon the pure of heart. Along these various paths of reflection and experience we find ourselves led to the very gateway of faith in an ordered universe and a beneficent God. Enable us, we pray, even if we cannot penetrate to the central shrine, to pass the threshold and face the mystery beyond. We confess that we know but in part; but it is not less true that in part we know. Beyond the concerns which

which shut us in we see at times the Divine event toward which the whole creation moves; within the self-assurance of our knowledge is the confession of our dependence; our wisdom is but the gathering of shells on the beach of the unknown; but the sea beyond is as real as the shore, and its far horizon beckons us to launch out into the deep. Why are ye fearful, said Jesus in the tempest, O ye of little faith? Give us some part in this tranquil confidence which rebukes the fears of those of little faith. Through the deeper interpretation of experience, through companionship with great thoughts and great souls, through moments of withdrawal from the haste and waste of life, through communion with nature and history and the serenity which it promotes, prepare us for larger revelations of the spiritual world. As knowledge grows from more to more, may more of reverence in us dwell, to chasten

chasten our self-confidence, to illuminate our darkness, to quicken our generous desires; until by faithfulness in that which is least we are made ready for faithfulness in that which is much, and through integrity and magnanimity in the affairs of this world may have committed to our trust the true riches.

For the Comfort of the Truth

We, the seekers for the truth, confess the inconstancy and hesitancy which hinder us in our search. The truth which confronts us often seems unwelcome or uncomfortable; the problems of our experience disturb or irritate us; we evade the truth, and comfort ourselves with self-deception; the demands and decisions of modern life are bewildering, and we take refuge in lukewarmness or indifference; the great realities of the spiritual life seem beyond our grasp, and we satisfy ourselves with the day's work and play, in an unexplored universe and with an unknown God.

Speak to these fugitive souls, we pray, and renew their courage. Let them hear the majestic promise that the Spirit of truth is the Comforter, and will guide those who follow it into all truth; that not

not by evasion or retreat but by determination and decision the path may be found to reassurance and peace. Give them a fresh clarity of judgment, to see things just as they are, without distortion or illusion, that the Spirit of truth, which is Thy Holy Spirit, may become a sufficient interpreter and comforter.

And among the complex and disquieting problems of the modern world, direct and simplify conduct by the same sense of guidance and control. From the subterfuges of legislation, and the sophistries of reasoning, which divert truth to partisanship, and justice to special pleading; from the setting of inhibitions before resolutions, and profit before principle, good Lord deliver us; and establish confidence, veracity, and courage through the comfort of the truth.

More than all, we pray for the same Comforter among the perplexities and obscurities which beset the religious life; where

where the subtleties of learning obscure from many minds the simplicity which is in Christ. Rescue these hesitating and questioning minds from indifference or denial by a firmer grasp of the spirit of the truth, and among the resources and satisfactions of the passing days, which often seem more comforting, reveal the spirit of the truth as the only permanent and substantial comforter. Partial and fragmentary as our knowledge of Thee and Thy ways must remain, may each glimpse of reality through the shadow of events, each partial truth held with reverent expectancy, each deep experience of joy and of sorrow, reveal Thy control, until the cry of our heart becomes, Lord, we believe; help Thou our unbelief. May the truths of eternity become no longer remote from the affairs of daily life, and the spirit of the truth bless even those who mourn, that they also may be comforted.

For the Great Adventure

We, whose lives are beset by exacting cares and burdened by indecision and timidity, pray for courage to face life as a great adventure, with its summons to the daring joy of a tireless quest. We are environed by the unknown and the unknowable; the things which are near and seen shut from view the things which are spiritual and eternal; we are tempted to be satisfied with a life secure from questioning and sheltered from risks; we set the motto "Safety first" along the road of our desires; we distrust our dreams and deny our faith lest they prove illusory; we yield ourselves to the prudential and materialized way of life.

Waken us, we pray, from this lethargy of the spirit, and give us the will to live bravely, even if it be dangerously, among the vicissitudes of the world.

We

We acknowledge our ignorance; we are environed by mystery; the great issues of life elude our comprehension, and the way to truth and beauty is often hard to find; yet on these overshadowed and tortuous paths which we are called to tread there is light enough for the brave soul to find its way. Round our imperfect knowledge is the reassuring sense of Thy guidance; beneath our stumbling decisions are Thy steadying laws; along our road stand trustworthy guides; and, more convincing than all, is the commanding voice which says, I am the way. If any man serve me, let him follow me.

Make us ready for this great adventure of living. We do not pray for immunity from risks; we pray for courage to face risks. We do not ask to be saved out of the world; we ask for strength to ally ourselves with the saviours of the world. Among the immediate and incidental problems of personal life, give us courage

courage to face the facts which confront us without evasion or self-deception; to atone for our blunders, not by repentance only, but by braver determination and decision. Among the perplexities of daily life give us equanimity and self-control, that we be not the slaves of circumstances but their masters, with the exhilaration of conflict and the joy of victory.

Finally, we pray that the adventure of living may be guarded and sustained by an undefeated patience, willing to wait for new light and to reënforce duty by loyalty. We know not what a day may bring forth; we are as those who hear the great command, Watch, therefore, for ye know not at what hour your Lord shall come. Arm us for the campaign of life with an unperturbed faith and an unconquered hope, that when the end of our adventure arrives, and we face the mystery that lies beyond, we may have the same tranquil courage to meet the

the things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man, but which Thou hast prepared for them that love Thee.

For Christian Unity

From the noise of diverse doctrines and the confusion of competing claims, we lift our prayers to Thy tranquillizing assurance of unity at the heart of things, and of that Fatherhood in Thee which makes one brotherhood of man. We have been led astray by self-confidence, or betrayed by self-distrust; the divisions which are temporary have hid from us the ideals which are eternal; the truths which are near have shut out the wider revelations; we have known in part and prophesied in part, and that which is perfect has eluded our hesitating grasp.

From futile controversies and presumptuous claims, and not less from the pride of heresy and the love of schism, good Lord, deliver us. Fix our minds, not upon the disputes which divide the Christian Church, but upon the majestic simplicity

simplicity and abiding authority of faith and hope and love; that we may walk worthy of the vocation to which we are called, forgiving one another in love; holding before us the chastening vision of coöperative discipleship, a church of living stones built up into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood of consecrated lives.

Our prayer for Christian unity is not for the abolition of differences, or for identity of convictions. It is the more reasonable and effective prayer for a larger faith, which finds room for differences, and which strengthens conviction by tolerance. We dare to pray that the majestic hope of Jesus Christ may not be long delayed, and that all who follow him may be one, as Thou, Father, wert in him, and he in us, not in identity of opinions but in unity of intention and desire; guided by Thy will, obedient to Thy law, and, above all things, putting on charity,

charity, which is the bond of perfectness, until in diversity of gifts there shall be one spirit, and in differences of administration one Lord.

For the Grace of Jesus Christ*

(*At Christmas*)

Our Heavenly Father, Who hast mercifully and patiently led us through the busy year, giving us more than we have deserved or even desired, give us at this Christmas time some share in the grace of Jesus Christ. Let the gracious spirit of Jesus, the spirit of the little child, as it knocks today at the hearts of men, enter our lives and bless them; that duty may become touched with beauty, and justice be forgotten in love. At other times we ask that we may do our tasks with consecration and patience; today we ask for more: that obligation may be changed to opportunity, and duty done with joy. At other times we ask that we may walk uprightly: today we pray for grace to bow ourselves to others' needs. Let

* Written by request, for the *Ladies' Home Journal* of December, 1905.

Let our ears hear the cry of the needy, and our hearts feel the love of the unlovely. Give our hands strength, not to do great things, but to do small things graciously. Let our gifts today be not a sacrifice but a privilege. Let us accept kindness with humility. Heal the wounds of misunderstanding, jealousy, or regret, that scar our hearts; and let the gentler air of the Christmas spirit touch our lives, as though the cold of winter were touched by the kindlier breath of spring. As the old year ends, and the new year begins, grant us peace with the world, and peace in our own hearts, that those we love, and those whom we may help, may have sweet joy and rest; and the grace of Jesus Christ be in us all.

For the Practice of Immortality

We bow ourselves with reverent expectancy before the majestic thought of immortality. We listen to the promise of Jesus, The righteous shall go into life eternal; we welcome the confession of his disciples, Death hath no dominion over him, it was not possible that he should be beholden of it; we repeat the assurance that what is excellent, as God lives, is permanent.

May these prophecies of permanence become a continuous and a sustaining hope, the venture of faith, the consolation of sorrow, the contact of our transient lives with eternity. We walk by faith, and not by sight; our assurance of the future is hesitating and intermittent; we await with trembling Thy further revelations. We follow after, that we may lay hold of the prize for which also Christ hath laid hold of us.

Yet

Yet while we thus hope and reason, give to us the more immediate assurance that the eternal life is waiting for our acceptance now and here. Ye have eternal life, it is written. We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. We pray, then, for the practice of immortality; the grasp among the things which are transitory of the things which are indestructible; the resurrection from the dead which is practicable now. If ye be risen with Christ, it is written again, seek those things which are above. In each conquest of the flesh by the spirit; in each restraint of passion; in each experience of companionship with lives that were not made to die; in each thought of Jesus Christ, over whom death had no dominion, may we hear the summons from death to life, as though the Father greeted once more His wandering child, and said, This My son was dead, and is alive

alive again; he was lost, and is found. Prepare us thus by the daily discipline of this present life for those blessings and opportunities which may await us; that with minds free from apprehension, forgetful of grievances, and generous in judgments, we may be ready for the things which God has prepared for them that love Him, and in the practice of immortality may prove its reality, and confirm a rational and living faith.

For a Worshipping Congregation*

Most gracious God, who art ever more ready to hear than we are to pray; who knowest our necessities before we ask and our ignorance in asking, behold us here, coming from all our various homes and works, with all our different faults and needs, asking in a common prayer for light upon our way and for peace within our hearts. And even as we come Thy Spirit meets us — yes, waits for us while we are yet a long way off — waits to receive, and forgive, and bless. What is our prayer but an answer to Thy call? What is our worship but the return of the wandering child back to the Father's home? Give us the listening ear; give us the responsive will; and bring such answer to each sincere and simple prayer as each one of us severally needs;

* Written, by request, for the *Christian Century Pulpit* of May, 1930.

needs; giving to one of us more courage, and to another more self-restraint, and to yet another freedom from selfishness and self-interest, and to us all the inner peace of mind which the world can neither give nor take away. Here are the rich resources of our favored lives, — health, strength, youth, joy, love. Rescue us from the meagre use of Thy great gifts, that at Thy coming we may return Thy trusts with interest. Maintain in us the fidelity of those to whom much has been given and from whom much will be required, that we may hear at last the kindly benediction, Well done, good and faithful servant! Enter into the joy of Thy Lord!

But not for ourselves only do we pray, in the tranquil circumstances of our favored lot, but for all who on this day of rest need to find rest for their souls; for those whom we most love, that their homes may be guarded by the sense of Thy

Thy presence and their hearts established in Thy law; for the sick and those who watch by them, that they may be comforted; for the overworked and those who find no work to do, that the sense of Thy companionship and compassion may bring hope and peace, and that those who are weary and heavy-laden may have the strength they need. Steady the minds of the young as they face the problems of the time. We pray not that they should be saved from the world, but that they should be its saviours; unspoiled by prosperity, unafraid in adversity; saving the soul of America by their confidence and joy.

Finally, we pray for our country in these days of grave decisions; that our people may be delivered from partisan aims and petty controversies, and be led up to the high places of national magnanimity and honor. From all narrow ambitions and personal ends, from pride, vainglory,

vainglory, and hypocrisy, from malice, uncharitableness, and suspicion, good Lord, deliver our Nation; that at last we may be that happy people whose fear of Thy judgments is the beginning of wisdom, and is the end of all other fear.

This is our prayer, in the faith and hope and love which are in Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant it to us, we pray, not as we may thus ask but as may be from day to day expedient for us, showing us in this world a better knowledge of Thy truth, and in Thine own time and way, soon or late, unfolding before us the greater privileges and opportunities of the life everlasting.

For the Baptism of a Child

Almighty God, in whose loving care the successive generations of mankind are one family under one gracious Father, we pray that this child, now dedicated to Thee, may become conscious of Thy daily guidance, and be touched by the spirit of the Master who took little children in his arms, put his hands upon them and blessed them. And to these parents give Thy benediction, that they may faithfully and patiently fulfil their happy task, and draw the heart of their child towards themselves and towards Thee. And to this company, united in their affection for this child, speak Thy message of loyalty and trust, that the spirit of the little child may teach them the way of Thy kingdom, and renew in their hearts Thy precious gifts of hope and faith and love.

For a Marriage

Most gracious God, we pray for Thy benediction on these lives now made one, and consecrating their union by solemn promises of mutual obligations. Unite their lives in mutual affection, forbearance, and patience, that they may be sharers of each other's joys, consolers of each other's sorrows, and maintained in mutual affection amid all the changes and chances of this life. Enrich their experience with the joy and peace which they may find together, and for which those who love them confidently pray; and do for them far more exceedingly than even our hearts could desire, out of the abundance of Thy love in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

For a Funeral

Our Heavenly Father, Who art waiting to receive and answer each sincere and simple prayer, we turn to Thee in our great need, asking for light in our darkness and deliverance from our doubts and fears. Thou sendest forth Thy breath, we are created; Thou takest away our life, we die and return to the dust. Whether we live, then, or die, we are in Thy compassionate and loving care; and the shadow that darkens our path is but the close approaching, overbrooding shadow of Thy nearer presence.

Here, then, we commit to Thy unfailing love the beloved soul now departed. We thank Thee for the gracious memories which gather about this life, for kindly deeds and thoughts, for the love freely given and the love modestly received, for the patient bearing of the heavy cross of solitude and pain, and now

now at last for quiet release from the burden of the flesh and entrance into the peace reserved for those who love Thee. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Sanctify this sorrow to those who most deeply mourn, that they may be comforted. Sustain them in their bereavement, and confirm their faith by tranquillizing memories and confident hopes; that the great words may be spoken again, Let not your hearts be troubled; My peace I leave with you; I go to prepare a place for you.

And to us all, as we gather here in a common sorrow, speak Thy solemn messages of life and of death. The more we perceive that the things which are seen are temporal, so much the surer make us that the things which are not seen are eternal. Teach us to live as those who are prepared to die; and when Thy summons comes, soon or late, teach

teach us to die as those who are prepared to live; that living or dying we may be with Thee, and that nothing henceforward, either in life or in death, shall be able to separate us from Thy love which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Support us all the day long, till the shades lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then in Thy mercy give us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last.*

* The last paragraph is from the conclusion of the sermon by Cardinal Newman on "Wisdom and Innocence" in his *Sermons Bearing on Subjects of the Day* (ed. 1869), p. 307.

II

EXPERIENCE

For the Overcoming of Sins

Eternal God, in whose righteousness is our strength and in whose mercy is our hope, we pray for Thy guidance and correction when we find ourselves beset by temptation or falling into sin. Here are the follies and blunders which blot our past: its grievances unforgiven; its hasty judgments unrecalled; its passions unrestrained; the sins of temper or disposition or will which have overmastered us; the foolish pride which has turned our hearts from self-forgetfulness; the low ambitions for ourselves or for the world which have misled or ensnared our wills. We have done that which we ought not to have done, and have left undone that which we ought to have done. Not as the Pharisee do we pray: God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are; but as the publican, who hides his face and makes his confession: God,

God, be merciful to me, a sinner. With sincere repentance and undisguised contrition we lay before Thee the faults which haunt our memories, and from which we cannot now be rescued save by worthier lives. Let us see ourselves without pretense or evasion, with duties undone, and opportunities missed; with friendships neglected, and passions unrestrained; that our prayer may be to forget the evil things which are behind, and to press forward to the worthier life that lies before. To him that overcometh, it is written, shall be given all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. Fulfil in us this merciful promise, that we be not overcome by evil but overcome evil with good, and that the Father's forgiving welcome to His erring child may be heard again: This My son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.

For Release from Fear

Almighty God, whose laws are our guide, and in whose love is our peace, we turn to Thee from the perplexities and uncertainties which daily beset us, and pray for relief from disquieting and cowardly fears. We are bewildered by the confusions of the world; we lose the way of certitude and self-control; we are tempted by petty annoyances, by despondency and doubt; the fear to do wrong paralyzes the power to do right, and our decisions falter under the strain of apprehension and self-distrust. The Scripture is fulfilled in us: Our hearts fail from fear, and from looking after the things which are to come.

Restore to lives thus smitten with spiritual prostration the sanity and courage they sorely need; and banish the evil spirit of fear by the expulsive power of new affections and desires. Turn our minds

minds from self-scrutiny to self-forgetfulness, and from the fear of doing wrong to the love of doing right. Rescue us from anticipated or imaginary troubles, that we be not anxious for the morrow, but let the morrow care for the things of itself. Assure us that surrender to fear is practical atheism, and that the trivial vicissitudes of life are forms of discipline which invite to mastery. Give us the exhilaration of moral victory, and teach us that there is no fear in love, for perfect love casteth out fear.

And through this conquest of fear by self-forgetfulness, lead our anxious hearts to the deeper meaning of experience, and to that form of fear which is justified and salutary, — the fear of Thy judgments, which is the beginning of our wisdom. Free us from the apprehensions which concern ourselves by the restraining fear of infidelity toward Thee, and subdue our imagined ills by real and controlling

controlling faith; that we may be led from restlessness and helplessness to tranquillity and strength, as those to whom Thou hast given, not the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

For a Straight Life

Beset as we are by the misleading counsels and crooked practices of the world, we pray for guidance in a straight way of life. The devices and duplicity of business dealings have become familiar and enticing; the sophistries of cynical writers beguile us with their cleverness; and, more than all, the inclinations of our own hearts to self-indulgence and self-deception tempt us to evade our duty and to take the shortest way to happiness.

Amid these solicitations of modern life, which silence our consciences by their subtle persuasions, give us, we pray, a firmer hold on Thy immutable laws of veracity and honor, and make Thy way straight before our face. Search our hearts, and drive from them all indirectness, equivocation, and pretence; and fortify our decisions by sincerity, candor, and self-effacement.

To

To this end, establish us, we pray, in the simplicity which is in Christ; not the simplicity of ignorance or inexperience, but the simplicity which is straightforward, veracious, direct, without tortuous reasonings or the shadow that is cast by turning. We do not pray for refuge from a crooked generation, which calls evil good and good an illusion; or for shelter from the risks and storms of experience; we pray only for a straight way to go and for light enough to see it. As the mariner is guided by the undeviating needle which steadily points his course, so may we be held to our course by a tried and trusted faith, that in the decisions which may await us and the storms which may assail us the way may still be made plain and straight. Correct us by Thy discipline if we turn aside into crooked ways; hold before us the unswerving guidance of Thy inviolable laws; until that which is crooked in

in us is made straight, and the rough places of our experience are made plain, and we are no longer corrupted from the straightforwardness which is toward Christ.

For a Sense of Proportion

Amid the confusing multiplicity of our desires and cares, we pray for a finer sense of proportion in the judgment of our problems and plans. We are beset by trivial incidents and petty cares; the multitude of details, with their trials of temper and patience, hide our view of the larger purposes of life; its misunderstandings and collisions cloud the day with foolish animosity; we cherish our grievances and waste our friendships; we dwell on our doubts and deny our visions; we see things not as they are but as we wish them to be, with our prejudices mistaken for convictions and our hasty judgments for wisdom.

Deliver us, we pray, from these sins of disproportion, that our small concerns may not hide from view the light of Thine eternal laws, and that anxiety about

about trifles may be forgotten in contemplation of the True and Beautiful and Good. Chasten our judgments by humility; heal our misunderstandings by generosity; show us the excellence in others which we have failed to see, and rebuke the selfishness which has marred our own decisions. Quiet our anxious thoughts concerning the troubles of the day, and let the morrow care for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof; and that evil itself becomes powerless to harm when it is seen within the broad horizon of Thy redemptive will.

And as we turn from our own needs to the larger concerns of the world, save us from narrow and provincial views, and restrain us from precipitate conclusions concerning men or affairs. Temper our convictions by the confession of our ignorance, and round about our knowledge show us the majestic mystery of the

the unknown. Thus restore us to a fresh sense of proportion, that we be not ruffled in temper or robbed of serenity by the vicissitudes of life. Set before us the Master of the spiritual life, as he moved through his short years of trial, unperturbed by adversity, unafraid of hostility, and praying for those who crucified him, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Sustain our lives in serenity and goodwill, that the incidental may not hide the eternal, or the vexing problems of the day disturb our peace of mind. Help us to seek first, as it is written, the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and in that single-minded loyalty to Thy kingdom and Thy righteousness may the other things we need, — patience, forbearance, self-restraint, and kindliness, — be from day to day added unto us.

For a Quiet Mind

We who are vexed and wearied — as who of us is not? — by the haste and waste of the hurrying days, turn to Thee, the source of our peace and strength, and pray for the gift of a quiet mind. The transient troubles of the day crowd upon us with their inexorable pressure; we are swayed by gusts of passion and provoked to irritating words; the petty decisions of the moment disquiet our temper and dissipate our strength, and we come to the end of the day with a sense of futility or confusion or despair. Lift us, as by the steady grasp of a strong hand, from this slough of despond to the firm ground of insight and vision, that duty may be rescued from perplexity and work be unsevered from tranquillity. We do not pray that life shall be less exacting in its demands; we pray only that in the inevitable

evitable complexity of life we may not lose spiritual poise and mastery, and in the varied incidents of the passing day we may still serve Thee with a quiet mind.

To this end, all-seeing God, hold before us, without disguise, the great realities of experience, and the restraint and fidelity they demand; that our tongues may be kept from evil, and our lips from speaking guile; that in surrender to Thy will we may find our freedom, and in quietude of mind may regain strength. And if the problems of life become multiplied and its burdens grow heavy, let the promise of the Master be heard again, Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest; not that we may escape the labor, but that it may be lightened by love, and that even when heavy-laden we may find rest unto our souls.

For Strength in Solitude

Our prayer is for those who by reason of hard experience find themselves in spiritual solitude, of mind or heart or will; for the explorers of the truth, whose way leads them apart from their fellows into the solitude of research; for the dreamers of a better world, whose hope seems frustrated by selfish ambitions and sordid indifference, and who are tempted to cry, with the ancient prophet: I, even I only, am a prophet of God; but the prophets of Baal are four hundred and fifty men; and for the bereaved and forsaken in the solitude of their sorrow, craving the solace of beloved companionship, but called to bear their crosses alone.

Sustain such isolated souls by a strength which is not their own, but which is drawn from the infinite resources of the Eternal Will. Disclose to the truth-seeker some glimpse of the light,

light, to direct and reassure his solitary way. Reënforce the hope of a better world by the vision of that divine event towards which the whole creation moves. Comfort the uncompanioned heart by sanctifying memories and confident hopes, that as these lonely lives recall the self-surrender of Jesus Christ, his strength attained in solitude may not seem a visionary dream, and his majestic words may find an echo in their hearts: Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. In experiences like these, when the solitary soul must grope its way toward the light, give the assurance of Divine companionship, that the path, even if it must be hard and steep, may be safeguarded from despondency and despair, and the faltering steps be steadied along their way.

And,

And, from the abundance of Thy mercies, add the further blessing, which is often denied to prosperous and contented lives and is reserved for those who have felt the discipline of solitude, — the blessing of helping other lives along their difficult and disheartening paths; that solitude may become the instrument of sympathy, and lives tempted to lose heart may be sustained by the strength of other solitary souls. Restore the confidence of those who must thus walk alone, as they discover that through their own fortitude and fidelity other wayfarers upon the same dark road have found courage in their solitude and light upon their way.

For the Recovery of Health

Out of the bondage of illness and the torture of pain, the heart cries out for liberation and relief. The work of life seems frustrated, its pleasures thwarted, and its opportunities missed. The ills of the body suppress the vigor of the mind; the tension of nerves shatters restraint and self-control, and the weary days and wakeful nights rob one of patience and tempt to despondency or despair. The health which has been so thoughtlessly accepted, and so recklessly squandered, seems like wealth which has been wasted and has left one destitute. The cry of the ancient psalmist becomes the confession of the modern soul: Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O God. Hear my prayer, and give ear unto the voice of my supplication. O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence and be no more.

Most

Most merciful God, Who dost not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men, give Thy reassuring answer to the prayer for recovery of health. Subdue or control the pain of the body by preoccupation of the mind and discipline of the will, that one may be not overcome of evil, but may overcome the evil with good. Come with Thy spiritual visitation to the bedside of the sufferer, with self-forgetting thoughts and generous designs, that the pains of the flesh may not harm the health of the soul. Free the mind from contemplation of its own disappointments and disasters, and turn it to reflection on the abundant blessings still possessed. May illness thus fulfil its happy ministry of patience and love; and become, not a gloomy experience for others to cheer, but a scene of quietness and peace for others to share.

If it be Thy will that restorative resources

sources shall have their way, and the blessings of health be regained, let the reminiscence of illness be one, not of discontent and rebellion, but of tranquil days of escape from the stress and haste of life; or if in the course of nature health be denied or long postponed, let grateful thoughts control the mind, of friendships proved, of temptations controlled, of morbidness resisted, and of new opportunities of service discovered. Tranquillize the days and nights, until the mind, set free from self-seeking and complaint, yields itself to the mysterious but beneficent purpose of God, and the loyal life repeats the Master's word: Into Thy hands I commend my spirit. Not my will but Thine be done.

For Those in Sore Trouble

Look with a compassionate understanding, most merciful God, on the lives which are in special need of help, by reason of sore trouble or anxiety or care, that they may know themselves not helpless or alone, but upheld by Thy underlying and supporting arms. Their path has led through the valley of shadow, and they are groping their way through the dark. The sunshine of their faith has been hid, and it has been hard to believe in Thy beneficent care. Open the way before them toward the light, that even in partial glimpses they may discern the meaning of their experience, and verify the assurance that they must be perfected through suffering. Sustain them in the trouble they are called to bear, that out of weakness they may be made strong, and by enduring hardness become good soldiers of

of Jesus Christ. Save them from the selfishness of sorrow, and from the demand for complete interpretation, and renew their own self-control by sympathy with other lives, that they may find strength to bear their own burdens by sharing the burden of the world. Set before them the cross of Jesus Christ, not as a sign of sacrifice alone, but as the convincing witness of victory through sacrifice, that the final message of the Cross-Bearer may be heard again, Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled; neither let it be afraid.

For Kindlier Judgments

Almighty God, by whose merciful providence we are set in the happy companionship of friends and neighbors, and within the greater circles of the community and the world, give us, we pray, some part in Thy patience and wisdom as we venture to judge our fellow men. We are beguiled by thoughtlessness and passion, by the love of gossip and the willingness to believe evil, by the sense of grievance and the inclination to return the blow. The follies and foibles of others make a tempting mark for criticism or contempt; until sincerity seems to mean severity, and animosity is hid in the disguise of justice.

Restrain us from this unreflecting cruelty by the confession of our own faults and sins, that the rebuke of Jesus may be heard again: He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone.

Set

Set before us his searching admonition: Judge not, that ye be not judged; for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you. Turn our minds from judgment of others to self-judgment and self-confession; lest in beholding the mote in our brother's eye, we forget the beam that is in our own eye. Not as those who sit on the judgment seat, to correct or condemn others, but as those who lay before Thy judgment seat their own follies and faults, give us repentance and humility, and deliver us from self-importance and self-conceit. Temper our judgment of others, not with mercy only but with the justice which is tolerant because discerning, and forgiving because wise; assured that if we forgive not others their trespasses, neither will our Heavenly Father forgive our trespasses, and that in our judgment of others we ourselves shall be judged.

For Those Who Mourn an Early Death

Our prayer is for those who are called to mourn an unanticipated, and — as it must seem — a premature disaster. From the budding powers of youth, or the full flower of maturity, the beloved life has been swept away into the mystery of death, and those who rejoiced in its companionship are left desolate. The water of affliction has overwhelmed them; the proud waters have gone over their souls. They are tempted to rebellion, and threatened by despair. Where is the beneficent and loving God in events like these? Why standest Thou afar off, O God? Why hidest Thou Thyself in time of trouble?

Come to such souls, most merciful God, in their sore need, and though they may not fathom Thy vast designs, temper their sorrow with gratitude. Turn their

their thoughts from that which is lost to that which they can never lose, to the radiant charm of youth, to the undying influence of maturing powers, that these sanctifying memories may be to them as a garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. And beyond these intimate consolations, add a clearer discernment of the meaning of life; not in its duration but in its inspiration; not in the number of its years but in the timelessness of its integrity and charm; that the great words may be spoken again in their hearts: He having lived a short time has fulfilled a long time, and youth soon perfected rebukes the many years of the unrighteous. Set before them the appealing figure of the young Jesus, with his work, as it seemed, unfinished and his life prematurely and tragically lost; and let them hear his unperturbed and tranquillizing message: Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you. I have

have finished the work which was given me to do.

And give them, through the very sorrow they are called to bear, a further assurance of the life beyond sorrow; that they may sorrow not as those having no hope, but with the reassuring faith that what is excellent, as God lives, is permanent; and that those who mourn may be comforted by companionship with lives which do not die, and may repeat the confession of the first disciples of Jesus Christ: Death hath no more dominion over him. It was not possible that he should be holden of it. Sustain them by this blessed fellowship with those who are free from the law of sin and death, and give them, through Thy compassionate love, a steadying grasp on the power of the endless life.

For the Sick

Our prayers are for those who are sick, in body or in mind; that they may be sustained in their sufferings, and lifted from their despondency by the assurance of Thy disciplinary and beneficent control. Save them from restlessness, discouragement, and despair; that pain and weakness may not overwhelm their patience, but may turn their minds from the vicissitudes of the flesh to the resources of the spirit. Set before them the majestic figure of the suffering and cross-bearing Christ, the conqueror of pain through the fulfilment of his Father's will. May the prayer of the sufferer still be, Not my will but Thine be done; and if one is tempted to cry, Father, save me from this hour! let the words of the Master be repeated in the heart: For this cause came I to this hour. Father, glorify Thy name! May the surrender of the

the will be the recovery of its power, and conscious association with the Eternal bring serenity and self-control; until the light of love radiates from the sick room, and illuminates the home with the unclouded sunshine of self-forgetfulness and peace.

For Parents

Our prayer is for those fortunate husbands and wives who are blessed with the wonderful and precious gift of children. They are very grateful for this consummation of their wedded life; they love their children tenderly, and want to rear them in health and happiness. Yet they are beset by perplexities and anxieties, and often feel that they have missed the way of parental wisdom and love. Their children surprise them by inclinations and decisions which seem misleading or mistaken. Strange tastes and perilous passions seem to make life a hazardous occupation; the dependent intimacy of childhood slackens under the strain of youth; the shadows of the prison house of custom or companionship begin to close about the growing boy or girl, and parents seem to find themselves alienated or estranged when

when they most desire loyalty and love.

Give to these parents, when their good intentions seem to fail, a deeper understanding of their own mission, that they may know themselves called of Thee to their supremely happy and rewarding task. To this end, deliver them from all worldliness and self-indulgence, and from the foibles and follies which most easily beset them; and teach them in daily intercourse with their children to repeat the solemn pledge, For their sakes I sanctify myself. Show them that example is more persuasive than precept; that a stream is not likely to rise higher than its source; and that the education of childhood begins, not in instruction but in imitation, not in parental laws, but in parental life. Restrain their conduct and refine their conversation, that they may transmit the unconscious and abiding influence of a spiritually-minded home, and that their children,

children, among the problems of maturer life, may be guided by the happy memory of parental wisdom, sympathy, self-sacrifice, and love.

And, more than all, to such solicitous and conscientious parents, give a sustaining and unfailing supply of patience, — patience with diverse temperaments and uncongenial desires; a glad consent to give children their own lives, and to refrain from complaint or dictation. Divert the impatience of parents to their own irritating behavior or lack of self-control. And when the time comes that youth approaches its own decisions, and repeats to its parents the great words of Jesus, It is expedient for you that I go away, sustain the parents in an unperturbed peace of mind, without bitter memories of their own blunders or sins, confident that the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send, will teach their children all things, whatsoever has been said to them,

and

and will give to loving and patient parents the glad assurance, Let not your hearts be troubled; neither let them be afraid.

For Children

We remember before Thee, our Heavenly Father, the Teacher who called little children to him, and took them in his arms and blessed them. May this gracious friend still draw to himself the hearts of little children; and amid the ambitions and temptations of maturer life may his chastening message be heard again: Except ye become as little children, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. Maintain in the children we love that winsome guilelessness which makes them our guides to Thy kingdom. Save them from their besetting sins of selfishness and passion, and give them the healthy joy of those who love the Beautiful and the Good. We pray, not that they should be untouched by the world's temptations, but that they should be strong, both in body and in mind, to resist and overcome them. Discipline them

them by the athletics of the soul, that they may play the great game of life with courage, and meet its adventures without fear. Restrain and direct them among the duties which must soon confront them, that they may win at last the right to be called the children of God, because they love Him and keep His commandments.

For Young Men

Our prayer is for the young men, in whose hands is the future of the world and the destiny of the nations. We confess the sins which have overcome their forerunners, the lust for gain, the passion for power, the brutality of war, the temptation to worldliness and cynicism. We pray for a cleaner conscience and a clearer insight in our young men, that they may be the creators of a better world, and may enter it, not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give their lives a ransom for many. Rescue them from moral cowardice and from intellectual indifference, from self-distrust and self-conceit, from indolent conformity and unreflecting confidence; that our young men may not fail to see their visions while our old men dream their dreams. We pray, not that they may be saved from the dangers of the world,

world, but that they become the saviours of the world, redeeming it from its materialism and sensualism by their clean hands and pure hearts; entering it as spiritually-minded men of the world, to interpret its needs with insight, and to revive its courage with hope. As Jesus, looking upon one young man, loved him, and summoned him at any cost to follow, so he looks on young men today, bidding them follow in his steps, along the straight road of sincerity, modesty, and reverence. As chosen instruments of Thy purpose, to whom Thou hast committed much, and from whom much must be required, may these young men open the gate of the future and enter in, with this prayer upon their lips, that they may fulfil not their own wills but the will of Him Who sends them, and may accomplish that task in life which is given them to do.

For Young Women

Our prayer is for the girls who are just emerging from the guilelessness of childhood into the complex conditions and problems which meet their maturing lives. As they set forth on their great adventure, deliver them from reckless self-confidence, and not less from timid self-consciousness. Show them the straight and narrow way of courage and self-control, that they be no more children to whom the world is a playground, but mature women to whom the world is a field of opportunity and joy. Give them the happiness of self-forgetfulness, and amid the beautiful experiences which await them may they not miss the beauty of holiness. Direct them among the problems and decisions of life and thought, that their wills may be steadied as by a guiding hand, and they may find the way to go, and along that way the

the truth they need, and at the end of the way an abundant and satisfying life. Not as wilful seekers for transient delights, but as called by Thee to fulfil Thy purpose for them, may they forget their self-distrust, and be steadied in their self-restraint, and greet the future with glad expectation and reverent joy.

For Those of Middle Age

We who have reached the difficult years of middle age, when the self-confidence of youth has slackened and the serenity of old age has not arrived, pray for guidance through the problems and perplexities which now beset us. We have outgrown the expectancy and illusion of earlier years; the demands of life have become monotonous and wearisome; the poetry of experience has turned to prose; and we are threatened by tedious pleasures and irksome routine.

Summon us, we pray, by Thy call from this surrender to the temptations of middle age, — its sense of futility, its approach to dejection, its loss of joy; and lead us from the flatness of depression and self-contempt to the high places of opportunity which Thou hast reserved for those who stand between youth

youth and age. May self-centred ambitions and passionate desires be no longer our masters; may the fever of life be calmed; may we be free to ascend to the fresher air of the True, the Beautiful, and the Good. Rescue us from the hypocrisies of social life, and from the indifference of cynicism; and let serenity and candor rule our hearts and tongues. Teach us, we pray, that loyalty to truth is obedience to Thee; that unperturbed veracity is rational worship; and through the many truths which invite our minds lead us to that truth which makes and keeps men free.

Reveal to us, also, a fresh sense of beauty in nature, in art, and in human life; and enrich our experience with the responsive and ennobling love of beautiful things and beautiful characters, the fine art of living, the beauty of holiness.

Nor can we fail to hear Thy special call to those of middle age for generous and

and self-effacing service. The competitions and ambitions of the world are no longer appealing. The obligations of our homes, and the self-interest of our undertakings are either satisfied or subordinated; and the right to lead, with the courage to act, displaces timidity and self-distrust. Direct us, we pray, in this search for the efficient life, by Thy wisdom from above, and teach us how to sanctify ourselves for others' sakes. Through the doing of Thy will may we learn more of Thy teaching, until at last the True and Beautiful and Good, which are the witnesses of Thy control, sustain our lives, and the Middle Ages become, not the Dark Ages, but bright with a joy and peace unattained by youth and treasured for old age.

For the Aged

Eternal God, in whose vast designs the successive generations of mankind are like a passing hour, give Thy sustaining strength to those whose strength grows less as their years grow more. Reveal to them the sources of happiness and service which are reserved for them to find; the lessons of serenity and self-control which they may teach; the increase of insight through experience, and the fulfilment not of their own wills but of Thy will for them, that they may accept it with quietude of mind. Through the discipline of patience, and the privilege of generosity, give them the happiness of self-effacing love. As Thou dost release them from the pressure of the world, with its lusts and ambitions, may their desires be supplanted by chastening thoughts and sacred memories, and the backward look of repining

ing or despondency be forgotten in the forward look of glad anticipation for the soul and for the world. Their little day of experience has been, as the prophet said, not of light or of darkness, not wholly day nor night. Now, at the evening time, may there be light about them and within; the tranquil sense of sins and follies forgiven and grievances forgotten, and hopes undefeated even if unrealized, and love unassuming and forgiving, — an unclouded sunset, with its promise of a fair tomorrow.

III
VOCATION

For Teachers

Our prayer is for those who are called to the sacred ministry of teaching, that they may be sustained and reassured among the harassing problems of their daily tasks. The routine of work dulls its delight; the unresponsiveness of youth disheartens effort; the joy of guiding young minds slackens under the pressure of superimposed demands. Renew for these lives, O Spirit of Truth and Beauty and Goodness, the vision of service which first beckoned them to their work, that they may confront the mechanism of daily toil with the resources of spiritual power. Among the many truths they teach reveal to them the truth which makes and keeps men free. Through the confusing details with which they deal, help them to see things steadily and see them whole; that they may impart, not alone facts and

and rules, but the charm of learning and the beauty of holiness. Lift their teaching to the height of a moral opportunity, a communication of personality, that with all humility they may repeat concerning their pupils the majestic promise, I am come that they may have life, and may have it abundantly. As the unromantic tasks of each day are fulfilled, may the teachers lift up their eyes to the shining ideal of their vocation and know themselves to be workers with God, moulding the plastic lives of youth, ministers of Thy purpose to young lives, sanctifying themselves for others' sakes, and welcoming the gracious promise: Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Even as the Son of Man came, not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

For a School

We pray for Thy blessing on the young lives gathered in this school. Here are their happy companionships, their health and strength, their work and play, their freedom from many cares which beset less favored lives, their loyalty to the school, and the love of their watching homes. Help them to gather up all these experiences and desires in a sincere and simple prayer. Strengthen their resolutions and restrain their passions, that their bodies may be free from stain and fit to serve Thee with courage and honor. Waken in their minds the love of truth, and fill the day's task with the joy of learning. Banish from their hearts all unworthy desires, and from their lips all degrading talk, that they may put away childish things, fearing only what is wrong, loving only what is right, and ready with clean hands and pure

pure hearts to enter the world that needs their help. Let them remember how the boy Jesus, in the first words recorded of him, told his parents that he must be about his Father's business; and his later pledge that he must do the work of Him that sent him; and may the young lives of the present time, in simple dedication of obedient wills, be conscious from day to day that they are about Thy business, and are called by Him who sends them to do His will.

For a College

We commit to Thee, the Source of all wisdom, the work and welfare of our beloved College. Strengthen its governors with prudence, foresight, and discernment of the demands of a new age. Sustain its teachers in their daily tasks by unfailing patience and undefeated hopefulness, that they may be rescued from academic narrowness, unfettered by routine, and fortified by disinterestedness, magnanimity, and vision. Give to our students loyalty to duty and love of learning, that with chaste bodies and eager minds they may rejoice in their companionship and uphold the honor of the college. Deliver them from the follies which beset the lives of youth, and add to the training of their bodies the sterner discipline of spiritual athletics, that they may play the great game of life with fearlessness and self-control. Bind

Bind together teachers and students in a common loyalty, that they may be members one of another, in the one body of a corporate life, where the strength of each is found in that unity of the spirit which is the bond of peace.

We pray for the larger mission of this and of all places of sound learning, that as knowledge grows reverence may be more indwelling; that learning may be dedicated to life, and scholarship purified by humility, until the Spirit of Truth becomes the supreme ruler of academic life, and guides its servants to the truth which makes men free.

For Men and Women in Business

Out of the confusions and competitions of the business world men and women turn to Thee, the Source of their wisdom and peace of mind, and pray for the right direction of their absorbing lives. They find themselves over-burdened by detail and routine, and beset by anxieties and apprehensions; the obligations which environ them are exacting; their daily thoughts grow materialized and self-considering, and their judgments severe.

Restore, we pray, to these agents of Thy will the consciousness of their place in Thy vast design, that their integrity may reflect Thy righteousness, and their enterprises may share in Thy magnanimity and patience. Rescue them from the perversion of their power and from the evil designs which allure them, and control their decisions by disinterestedness

ness and veracity. As Jesus found his followers in the world of business affairs, — the merchant with his pearls, the servant with his lord's money, the buying and selling of commerce and trade, — so may his summons come to the business world today, that its material concerns may be lifted into their spiritual significance, and commercialism be directed by idealism, and trade find room for integrity, fidelity, and magnanimity. What shall it profit a man, it is written, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? May this solemn warning be heard again amid the temptations to sordid profit which beset business life, that the gains of trade may not involve the degeneration of desire, or the passion for profit risk the loss of the soul. Give, we pray, to administrators of business affairs a fresh sense of their privilege; save them from the subtle sins of self-seeking and self-importance; and offer

offer them the supreme happiness of converting prosperity into human welfare, and business life into a witness of Thy beneficent purpose for the world. Rescue them from the double life which threatens them, — of business through the week and of religion in occasional hours of worship, — that they may maintain consistency of faith and practice; not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope, patient in the tribulations which beset each business career, and in the daily conduct of their difficult affairs continuing steadfast in effective, even if unspoken, prayer.

For the Prosperous

Our prayer is for those who, by the industry and thrift of their ancestors or by their own prudence and initiative, have been set free from anxious thoughts of bread-winning, and are confronted by the privileges and the dangers of prosperity.

Give them, we pray, the daily sense of gratitude for deliverance from many burdensome cares and harassing fears, and for the broader experience and richer resources which lie before them and those whom they most love. Yet, no less clearly, set before them the new perils and unanticipated temptations which the prosperous must encounter, — the persuasions to indolence and self-indulgence, to vulgar ostentation and vain self-importance, to loss of incentive and ambition; and the new slavery of idleness, when the chains of habit may prove

prove more galling than the compulsions of work. Rescue the prosperous from the fate of futility, lest they find themselves sinking into the pitiful and disheartening ranks of the unemployed. When the guests are called, as Jesus said, to the marriage feast, may the prosperous be not condemned to hear the chastening command, Give this man place; and while the lowly are given warmer welcome, those who have thought themselves fortunate begin with shame to take the lowest room.

Set before them not less the special blessings which are reserved for the prosperous, — of generous and unremunerated service, of leadership untainted by expediency, of the wisdom of trained minds, and the opportunity offered to spiritually-minded men of the world. In the daily conduct of their affairs keep them close to the less fortunate, not to condemn or patronize, but to communicate

cate fraternalism and to meet the turbulent desires of the multitude with an understanding heart; that prosperity may permit, not escape from social duty, but enlistment in the honorable company of social servants. Unto whom much is given, it is written, of him shall much be required. May the prosperous, to whom much has been entrusted, pray that they may be ready to give more; rejoicing in generosity; reënforcing democracy, and watching, with their lights burning, for the coming of their Lord's judgment, and his solemn summons: Be ye therefore ready; for the Son of Man cometh in an hour when ye think not.

For the Employed

Our prayer is for the great multitude of workers, by hand or brain, in the vast workshop of the industrial world; for the clerks and salesmen and saleswomen in commercial establishments; for those who tend the whirling wheels of trains or factories, or who stoke the fires of foundries, or mend the roads, or scrub the floors, or in any of the varied forms of employment give continuity and stability to the work of the world. Reveal to each industrial worker, however humble or obscure his work may be, the dignity and significance of his task. Through the wearisome routine of duty and the noisy machinery of the world, may the worker hear the voice which says: My Father worketh hitherto, and I work; and in this consciousness of companionship with God the worker and with Jesus the carpenter may the courage and hope

hope of the worker be renewed. Deliver him from misleading counsels and reckless designs, from the delusion that work is debasing or enslaving, or that the work of the hand is less honorable than the work of the head. Assure him that a blessing, rather than a curse, was in God's command in Eden, In the sweat of thy face shalt thou earn bread.

In this acceptance of an honorable place, sustain the employed in their demands for just and humane conditions of their work. Stir the reason and conscience of legislators and employers to promote and reënforce the welfare of the employed. What shall it profit a country if it gain the whole world and lose its own soul, or if the vast machinery of industry has for its products goods rather than goodness, and degrades human lives into cogs of the machine? Correct, we pray Thee, the abuses of power by the education of the social conscience, or, if it

it must be, by the stern discipline of adversity; and revive in the industrial order the ancient truth of membership one with another, where the stability of the employer shall be found in the coöperative loyalty of the employed. To one Thou givest many talents, and to another few, to each according to his several ability; but when the day ends, the rewards of the Master are not for achievement or success, but for fidelity and patience; and those who seem to be among the great may hear the solemn admonition: I will give unto this last even as unto thee.

For the Unemployed

Our prayer is for those who, by reason of age or illness or industrial conditions, find themselves confronted by the tragedy of unemployment. Their idleness is harder to endure than the hardest work; their hearts are made sick by hope deferred and their courage slackens under the strain of uncertainty; their faith in a good God is threatened by the cruelty of men or events.

Rescue such disheartened lives from their despondency or despair, and quicken for their sakes the social conscience of the time. Give wisdom to legislators and administrators, that they may promote justice and mercy; and teach employers of labor the fundamental truth of industrial life, that workers of head and hand are members one of another, and that if one member suffers, it is the suffering of all. Control by Thy law of human

human brotherhood the lawless and futile controversies of our time, that unemployment may be no longer a condition to be endured but a sickness to be remedied; and that the workers of the world may be redeemed from the affliction of idleness, and, even more, from the tragic loss of the will to work.

Not less earnestly do we pray for those misguided lives which are unemployed by reason of prosperity and self-indulgence; which have lost the zest of work and the self-respect of the worker. We pray for those who have made of life a game and of idleness a vocation. From the perils of the parasitic life, from idleness procured by the work of others, from the anæmia of frivolous living, with its normal end in despondency and self-contempt; and from the decay of democracy through the very abundance of its blessings; — good Lord, deliver this generation; and summon the prosperous unemployed

ployed to the happy task of devising and sustaining work for the unemployed among the poor.

For Social Workers

We pray for a sense of Thy guidance and reënforcement for those who have given themselves to works of social service or reform. They have heard Thy call, summoning them from self-centred and self-indulgent lives to self-forgetting deeds and generous designs. The poor, the sick, the neglected children, the prisoners, the workless, the hopeless, have cried to them for relief and restoration, and they have answered that cry with their offerings of counsel or aid, and have found within themselves unsuspected resources of wisdom and contentment. Their service has become their freedom, and in what might seem sacrifice they have discovered an unanticipated satisfaction and joy.

Give to these ministers of Thy beneficence a clearer discernment of the privileges and the temptations which await them;

them; that their aim be not defeated by ignorance or condescension or instability of temper or loss of courage. To this end lead them to dedicate, not the emotions of their hearts alone, but the training of their minds and the conquests of their passions; that sentiment may not lapse into sentimentalism, or seem a sufficient substitute for wisdom. Teach them that not every one who wants to help can be a helper; that only those can bear another's burdens who are bravely and steadily bearing their own. Convince them that the social order must be redeemed, not by schemes but by saviours; not by organizations or programmes, but by the contagion of character, the persuasion of personality, and the insight which is promised to the pure in heart. Discipline and instruct them as they enlist in the war against want or suffering, that they may enter it, not as untrained recruits with no weapon

weapon but enthusiasm, but equipped for hard service, with discerning minds and understanding hearts, with sympathy steadied by science, and work justified by common-sense.

And, above all, in this arduous campaign of social service, arm its soldiers with an undefeated and untiring patience, that they may wait without loss of faith for the tardy coming of the better world. Assure them that each solitary sentinel as he guards his own trench is not alone, but has the army at his back, and behind all the Commander, Who directs the great campaign. Fortify the courage of each sentinel by this sense of companionship, and in his own work, which seems insignificant or ineffective, sustain him by faith in his Commander, that he may endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

For Physicians

Our prayer is for those who, by that compulsion of nature which is the call of God, have been led to undertake the arduous but happy career of physicians. They have been rescued from the solicitation of commercialism, and have found their fundamental satisfaction in the discovery of truth, in the joy of research, and in the ministry of healing. They have put the first things first, and where others have surrendered to the lust of gain or the habits of self-indulgence, they have found happiness, through laborious days and nights, in mitigating disease, anxiety, and pain.

For this work of self-effacing chivalry, in which sacrifice becomes a daily habit, and insight and skill their own rewards, sustain and strengthen these soldiers of the new time, enlisted for the beneficent war against human ills. Hold before

before them the ideal of their vocation, that they may know themselves to be allies with Nature in fulfilling Thy purpose for the world. Save them from sordid or mercenary aims, from jealousy and controversy, from equivocation and pretence, that they may walk worthy of the vocation to which they are called, speaking the truth with love, and crowning their wisdom with the essential grace of common-sense.

In this answer to the call of God, adorn their science with humanity, that they may be physicians not of the body only but of the mind and will, to whom the sick may turn as to a father-confessor for interpretation and reassurance, for the guidance of conscience, and the diagnosis of sins. Assure the physician that the care of the patient begins with caring for the patient. Direct each modest practitioner by the wisdom which is from above, that through laborious years of

of service he may win, not chiefly distinction or wealth, but the confidence and affection of a grateful community, and at last the apostolic and sufficient title of the Good Physician.

For Lawyers

Eternal God, whose laws of righteousness and truth control the destiny of men and nations, we pray for those who are called to determine and apply the laws of the land; that they may conform to Thy righteousness and promote Thy truth. Thou hast committed to them the sacred privilege of establishing order and securing equity. Hold before them the high ideal of their vocation, that they may do justly and love mercy and walk humbly with their God. They are threatened by the assaults of self-interest and ambition; they are solicited by mercenary aims; they are tempted to call evil good and good evil; to defeat justice by adroitness, and obstruct truth by strategy, until in courts and legislative halls the ancient prophecy may be heard again: Judgment is turned back, and justice standeth afar off; truth

truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Deliver Thy servants from these perils of their profession, that truth may stand boldly in the street, and equity enter fearlessly into the court room. Give prudence in counsel, courage in advocacy, and wisdom in decision. Rebuke by the chastisement of the people's condemnation the prostitution of the law by prejudice or partisanship or politics, and assure each practitioner that integrity is more precious than shrewdness, and principle to be preferred to profit. From futile and artful controversies, from the commercial estimate of distinction and success, and from the degradation of a profession into a trade or a game, good Lord, deliver all judges, advocates, and counsellors; that they may deserve the leadership which is put into their hands, and fulfil Thy holy purpose to judge the world with righteousness and the people with equity.

For Ministers of Religion

We pray for those, who, under diverse forms and differing administrations, are charged with the conduct of worship and the guidance of souls in their religious experiences and needs. To all such trusted interpreters of Thy message to human life give the continuous consciousness of Thy sustaining and enlightening presence; that they may speak, not the wisdom of this world, but the hidden wisdom which God has revealed to them by His Spirit. Thou hast summoned them to the solemn privilege of confirming faith, of rebuking sin, and of testifying to the simplicity that is in Christ. Arm them for this high vocation with diligent and open minds, with undiscouraged and patient wills, and with the sword of the Spirit, which disarms controversy by character, and establishes peace by love. Save them from the

the cheapening of their calling by the arts of the sophist or the dogmatism of the bigot; and rescue them not less from the self-assurance of ignorance and the illiberality of liberalism.

To this end, accustom their daily thoughts to dwell on Thy purposes and laws, and to practise the presence of God. May they speak as those who have climbed the height of vision, and descend with the glow of that exaltation to interpret and cheer the souls which await their ministry below. We pray not that they may be made free from conflicts and defeats, but that they may endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ; not for a secure and sheltered career, but for courage to bear the vicissitudes of life as those who have heard the uncompromising command: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me. May the denying of self become the

the discovery of self, and the cross that must be borne become the sign not of defeat but of victory. Through rich experiences of insight and power, give them the joy which is reserved for those who are dedicated to Thy service,—the joy of making plain to others the way which has been hard to find, the happiness of spiritual authority, the contentment of self-forgetfulness, and the glad desire to live as those who come not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give their lives a ransom for many.

For Our Country and the Fellowship of Nations

Almighty God, whose laws of righteousness and justice determine the destiny of nations, establish among the people of our Nation, and those having authority over them, the righteousness which shall be their safety and the justice which shall be their strength. Thou hast brought us through many vicissitudes of conflict and adversity to great prosperity and power, as the people of Israel confessed themselves led from a strait into a large place; and now Thou dost confront us with the obligations of our abundance, and the perils of our prosperity. Guide, we pray, the consciences of our people to meet the untried and grave demands of the present time. As our forefathers prevailed over the dangers of their great adventure, so direct us among the unprecedented decisions

cisions of today. Give us the wisdom which is from above, and set before our minds the truth which makes men free. Deliver us from mean ambitions and misguided desires, that our Nation may be fortified by magnanimity and restrained from divisive aims. If we are tempted by pride of possession or lust of gain or the passion for self-indulgence, chasten and correct us, even by the stern discipline of tribulation or disaster; that we may be led from pride to humility, from ostentation to simplicity, and from the consciousness of power to the consciousness of dependence on Thy immutable and redemptive laws. Or if through sane counsels we be saved from national corruption and humiliation, and established in honor among the nations, grant to us a consistent and continuous fidelity, and overcome among us the lust of war by a fearless following of the ways that lead to peace. To this end, give

give to those set in authority over us for administration or legislation the authority of integrity and the wisdom of unselfishness; that they may be set free from ambitions of place or party, and dedicated to the comprehensive cause of the Nation's good.

Nor do we pray for our own country alone, in its isolated enterprises and its self-centred ends, but for the fellowship of nations which we share, that we may not be enticed by hostile designs, or involved in suicidal controversies, or tempted by the foolish fallacy that one nation can prosper at another's cost. Help us to deserve the blessing which is promised, not to the peace-lovers or the peace-talkers but to the peace-makers, the patient builders of national fraternalism and coöperative strength. Bind the nations of the world in the unity of membership one with another, where the welfare of each may be found in the prosperity

prosperity of all. And so direct our own deliberations and decisions that we may win that leadership among the nations where power is dedicated to service, and where the fear of Thy judgments is the beginning of our wisdom, and is the end of all other fear.

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